**Theme 2: Childhood & Growing Up**

In contrast to all adults whom **Holden** sees as riddled with flaws and phoniness, he sees children as pure, gentle, innocent, and perfect. The characters he speaks most fondly about in the novel are all children. He constantly dreams up schemes to escape growing up, such as fleeing to a New England cabin or working on a ranch out West. However, Holden’s view of perfect childhood is as incorrect

as his view of the adult world as entirely “phony,” and just helps Holden hide from the fact that the complex issues ranging from sex, to intimacy, to facing death, all of which he will have to

face in growing up, terrify him. Further, this form of delusional self-protection can only last so long. Holden *will* grow up, whether he likes it or not.

***DIRECTIONS: Identify 3 children from the novel. How do you know that Holden cares about this person.***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Character | How does Holden feel about this person? |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |